

**ANURUCK “LUCKY” SUTTIPRASERT**  
**Captain, Luck Chalm, Charleston, SC**

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Date: September 12, 2014

Location: Docks of Crosby’s Shrimp and Fish, Charleston, SC

Interviewer: Sara Wood

Transcription: Shelley Chance, ProDocs

Length: Nineteen minutes

Project: Lowcountry Maritime

*[Interview begins off-mic on the docks of Crosby’s Fish & Shrimp in Charleston, SC]*

**00:00:00**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** The family that’s the only thing we can talk. Every evening before we go to bed we can talk to family, wife, kids whatever you know.

**00:00:10**

**Sara Wood:** And Nick Jay was telling me that your wife’s name is—?

**00:00:14**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Chalam. Yeah that’s why the boat—you see that. Luck Chalm. My Luck, and then her Chalm. Really Chalam, Thai name is Chalam, but she wanted to put Chalm in it. A lot of people call my boat Lucky Charm, you know so it can go like a charm. How you—how you spell that? How you pronounce that? Calm, right? Like, Luck Calm. [Inaudible]

**00:00:41**

**Sara Wood:** I was wondering about that.

**00:00:42**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** That’s why everybody calls—asks me why you—you wrote it, right? I said, “That’s my wife’s name.” You know like a lucky chalm. So we use that word chalm.

**00:00:56**

**Sara Wood:** So it’s like chalm.

**00:00:58**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yeah. Chalm, chalm, lucky—

**00:00:59**

**Sara Wood:** That’s really pretty.

**00:01:01**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yeah, she—she okay. [*Laughs*] We be—yeah.

**00:01:06**

**Sara Wood:** Lucky, I’m just going to introduce us for the tape and then I’m going to ask you a couple questions.

**00:01:10**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Okay, okay. You can leave that thing [*referring to the microphone*] down right or is that close to the mouth?

**00:01:14**

**Sara Wood:** Yeah, I’m just going to kind of put it over here.

**00:01:15**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh really?

**00:01:16**

**Sara Wood:** They call this the dead cat because it prevents the wind sounds from coming in.

[Laughs] So, I’m just going to kind of leave it over here and you can move around how you want to.

**00:01:25**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** You can leave it right here, right?

**00:01:26**

**Sara Wood:** Yeah just like that, yeah. It’s kind of—it’s kind of—

**00:01:30**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** And you cannot leave it on the table?

**00:01:32**

**Sara Wood:** I can kind of put it like right here.

**00:01:33**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh really? I thought that thing will pick up that far.

**00:01:37**

**Sara Wood:** No, it only—it goes right there.

**00:01:39**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Okay.

**00:01:40**

**Sara Wood:** That’s why I’m using it. Yeah, I have another one that gets everything—

**00:01:43**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yeah, yeah, I see, like a football, you know soccer they get on the side of the field.

**00:01:49**

**Sara Wood:** Yeah, you know—you know.

**00:01:51**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** [*Laughs*] Okay, yeah.

**00:01:52**

**Sara Wood:** So it’s September 12, 2014. This is Sara Wood with the Southern Foodways Alliance and I’m sitting here—Lucky what’s your last name?

**00:02:03**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Suttiprasert.

**00:02:06**

**Sara Wood:** Suttiprasert?

**00:02:07**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yeah.

**00:02:08**

**Sara Wood:** I was wondering—we’re sitting out here on Crosby’s dock, Crosby’s Fish and Shrimp in James Island around Folly Creek. And Lucky would you say hello and introduce yourself and tell me your name?

**00:02:18**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Hello, my name is Anuruck Suttiprasert.

**00:02:23**

**Sara Wood:** And where are you from originally?

**00:02:24**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh I’m originally from Thailand and I come to America in 1975 until now so how many years? I never count. [*Laughs*] Yeah, they—

**00:02:39**

**Sara Wood:** And Lucky for the record would you tell me your birth date?

**00:02:42**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh I was born in July 27, 1949.

**00:02:49**

**Sara Wood:** And—and so you came to the states when you were younger. Why—why did you move from Thailand and—?

**00:02:56**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Okay, I move from Thailand and come here to go to school. And I was go to school for three years, not really—in the school and then I got—quit the school and come out working.

**00:03:10**

**Sara Wood:** When you say working did you—did you come out working on the boat or—?

**00:03:13**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** No, I was working in the restaurant earlier for a few years before I come to the—do the shrimping business.

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**0:03:24**

**Sara Wood:** And I’m wondering how—did you move—when you moved from Thailand to the states did you move to the Charleston area?

**00:03:30**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** No, the first place I came to my country I—I lived in Memphis, Tennessee. And then after that a few years I moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

**00:03:45**

**Sara Wood:** What was that like for you just like your first impressions of moving from Thailand to Memphis and Atlanta?

**00:03:54**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh only—only thing I think I come here just to go to school, finish school, and go back to my country. But it not that way, so—. I’m still here since then ‘til now.

**00:04:12**

**Sara Wood:** And so how did you get to Charleston? Well actually I want to back up. So you were working in the restaurants and then you started working on a shrimp boat, how did that—how did you go from restaurants to shrimp boat?

**00:04:20**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Okay, well it was—a friend of mine called me from Savannah, Georgia and said, “Shrimping make good money. You buy the boat and then start shrimping and you make good money.” So ‘til then I quit the restaurant and come to the shrimping business, so far—not that good.

**00:04:44**

**Sara Wood:** The business?

**00:04:46**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Not good business.

**00:04:48**

**Sara Wood:** How come?

**00:04:49**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Well the expense right now is so high, shrimp prices are up and down, good and bad, the majority of the fuel, that’s a problem for everybody right now you know, the cost is almost \$4 a gallon so—. Just like you see today I put 400 gallons and that cost you quite a bit of money, you know, for make it \$3.50 you know that’s a lot of money.

**00:05:16**

**Sara Wood:** And how often do you have to fill your boat up like that?

**00:05:18**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Every trip so it means every five—six days. And then five—six days we come in and take the shrimp off and then we go home for a couple days and then we start another trip. That’s when we really fuel again.

**00:05:36**

**Sara Wood:** Lucky I wanted to jump back and ask you one question. When you were growing up in Thailand were you connected to the shrimp industry, the fishing industry?

**00:05:45**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Not at all. I’m—I’m the student over there. [*Joanie Cooksey and Ellie Berry are talking in the background on the docks preparing for a fish fry.*] I graduated for that and then straight to America to go—to study some more but never graduated, just for a few years and then go to working.

**00:06:02**

**Sara Wood:** And when your friend called you up from Savannah and said, “come work on this boat,” were you—did you jump at the chance or did you think about it for a little while?

**00:06:10**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** I think about it for a while because my job—last long and I make good money already so he said that better not stay in the job in the restaurant that’s why I come you

know come down to Savannah and start working shrimping. And never, never see that much money like he talking about.

**00:06:29**

**Sara Wood:** How long—do you remember that first time out on the boat?

**00:06:32**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** I start shrimping in 1982 until—until now.

**00:06:38**

**Sara Wood:** And how old were you when you started, do you remember?

**00:06:41**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Uh about thirty-five, thirty-five years.

**00:06:49**

**Sara Wood:** So you started doing that in 1982 and you’re still doing it today? What’s kept you doing it?

**00:06:54**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Well, only job I have and I love the water. I love the ocean. That’s what keeps me staying here and then we never keep it—just hope it’s getting better.

**00:07:10**

**Sara Wood:** How much longer would you like to do this for?

**00:07:14**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** I'm sixty-six years old now and I'm retired in the next couple years, I'm going to retire. My wife wants me to retire so bad so we can stay together for a *long* time, final life.

**00:07:29**

**Sara Wood:** And she's down in Georgia you said?

**00:07:32**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** No, right now she's in Jacksonville [Florida].

**00:07:34**

**Sara Wood:** In Jacksonville?

**00:07:34**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yeah, she had to take care of her grandson. Now we go back and forth between Charleston, Savannah, and Jacksonville every time I come in. Actually I just come back from Jacksonville this morning, stopped at Savannah and come to Charleston and get ready for the next trip.

**00:07:54**

**Sara Wood:** And could you—I know that there’s no such thing as a typical trip Lucky but can you talk about just the nature of your work, like what it’s like out there and—and what—how long you stay for and how you know when to come back in?

**00:08:05**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Okay, every day working we start little time, six o'clock, six-thirty and quit more than likely we quit early before quitting time about five o'clock, five-thirty and we finish probably about nine o'clock sometimes and sometimes ten. And then after that we just cook and have some dinner and go to bed. And the trip—and we don’t know, it depends on how good of the shrimp and how bad of shrimp. We can’t do anything, we—we coming home early.

**00:08:43**

**Sara Wood:** And what kind of—can you talk about the kinds of shrimp you catch?

**00:08:45**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh just like now we catch white shrimp, uh-hm. We do have some medium—small, medium, and large mixed up shrimp.

**00:08:56**

**Sara Wood:** And I know this is kind of a strange question, Lucky, but I’m wondering if you have a story that you’d like to share about why you love this so much and whether it was a

particular day out there that you just maybe thought that you weren't going to do it for much longer and then it changed your mind and made you decide to keep doing it.

**00:09:14**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Uh, I have experience on the cooking, mechanic, but this job I only job I love to do it because I'm only boss and I have no boss and I work with my crew. I'm not really picky about it but we work together so—and something of the ocean, [*Sound of ice being loaded and talking in the background*] my crew and me love it so much. We go every day, we quit and we sit and we look at the ocean and we look at the sky, we look at the moon, sun what—anything out there it seems like, just free from anything. Nothing to worry about money or trouble until you come to the dock and now you worry you trouble you have.

**00:10:10**

**Sara Wood:** Your worries come as the dock gets closer?

**00:10:14**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** What?

**00:10:15**

**Sara Wood:** Were you saying that when—as soon as you see the dock the worries come back?

**00:10:18**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh yeah, when—after you see the dock you know what you’re going to have when you get to the house, all kinds of bills you have. You make money or not, if you’re not money you got to borrow somebody and then you got to go back to work to pay people you owe. That what we worry about. We—every time we’re out, we’re not worrying about anything because we’re out there. We don’t have to pay a bill or nothing until we come to the dock or to the house.

**00:10:43**

**Sara Wood:** Does it ever get lonely out there?

**00:10:46**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Nah, we—we have—do have the phone. Everybody have their phone and we can call to family and talk to the friends. We got radios, we do have the radio and we can talk to friends all day. And then at nighttime we go to bed and we get—go to bed and morning we say good morning to everybody. That’s the normal thing for shrimp life, fishing—.

**00:11:08**

**Sara Wood:** And Lucky I was—I was going to ask you, do you normally—when you come in do you normally sell here to Crosby’s or do you have other markets?

**00:11:15**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh we—we—we always sell to Crosby’s. We never sell shrimp to anybody because we tie the boat here and we—. So I been at this dock over twenty-five years so Joanie [Cooksey] and Ellie [Berry] are just like a family to me, so I never sell to nobody just to the dock.

**00:11:38**

**Sara Wood:** Oh sorry. Okay, okay and I wanted to ask you what—besides you know you talked about fuel costs and that being a challenge, but what—what are some other things that you have to—what are some of the other challenges to working this kind of job?

**00:11:59**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** This kind of job the challenge we have is the day we not catch the shrimp and the day we got—we do have bad weather, like a rain, sea, wind. That—that we have the challenge all that where do we have—or the shrimp we caught and the price of the shrimp we sell—that’s what we challenge.

**00:12:25**

**Sara Wood:** What do you love so much about this job?

**00:12:28**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Well I been doing it for a long time and I born in my country—my house nearby the river and we played with the water, when kids—to try and I kind of—I do have

the boat at the house in my country and over here, I come here just like family said you go over there and you still work, ride a boat, work with the water, so the same thing I have in my country when I was a kid.

**00:12:56**

**Sara Wood:** Were your parents involved in the industry at all?

**00:12:59**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** No, my parents are different. I never do this kind of job until I come to the America. I learn from a friend of mine, so he teach me how to shrimp.

**00:13:09**

**Sara Wood:** What’s your friend’s name who taught you how to shrimp?

**00:13:12**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** John, his name is John McGuire from Savannah. He really nice guy, he told me how to catch the shrimp and how to drag and how to look for where shrimp are at, like that.

**00:13:27**

**Sara Wood:** And I’m wondering I mean have you always done shrimp Lucky or did you do other—did you ever fish for commercial—like commercial fishing or anything like that?

**00:13:34**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** I do—I do. I was fishing for snapper, grouper, for about seven or eight years before I quit and then started shrimping full-time.

**00:13:50**

**Sara Wood:** How come you quit the—?

**00:13:52**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** That time I worked with somebody and the guy—the owner of the boat just sell the boat.

**00:14:00**

**Sara Wood:** If you had to give—if you’re looking at a younger generation that’s—that you know I’m wondering what you’re seeing, what’s different now as opposed to—what you’re seeing in terms of the traditions of this kind of work from when you first started. What’s changed since you started?

**00:14:16**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** When we first started the net we do have we don’t have any fish eye or turtle excluder. And that time we can catch 100 percent shrimp. Every time, every drag we made it but now we have fish eye and the turtle excluders to stop turtles from getting in the back and drown and we lost about forty percent of the shrimp ‘cause we do catch sixty percent of 100 percent shrimp. That hurt us a little bit, so that—that is a problem we do have right now but

that—that’s good so keep the turtles alive. The net keeps the turtles and we’re not killing a lot of fish, so we—we had to keep going.

**00:15:03**

**Sara Wood:** And I have one more question for you. When you see the younger generation coming into this wanting to go out onto the boat and carry on these traditions what would you say to them? What kind of advice would you give them?

**00:15:15**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** [*Laughs*] I—I going to say to them this industry looks like—looks like it’s going down. It’s not going to be good anymore in the future. And this industry you buy the boat, you have to know how to work on the boat yourself better than hiring some people working. So that could be keep on the high cost on the expense you keep for yourself. And then I prefer not too good to [*Laughs*]*— [Guys on dock say hello to Lucky, the interview gets a little distracted]* not too good to do buy the boat or shrimping. That’s what I think about that.

**00:16:08**

**Sara Wood:** Lucky you’ve been really generous of your time. I’m wondering, is there anything else you want to add about your job or the tradition that you’re carrying on that you’d want to share that I didn’t think to ask you?

**00:16:19**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Well what that means?

**00:16:22**

**Sara Wood:** Oh just anything else you want to add that I didn’t ask you about that—?

**00:16:26**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh, oh, oh, I don’t know what to say about my job. The only thing I just keep doing it because I got no job, no—nothing else to do. I’m getting old. Probably nobody would hire me. I have experience on mechanic or cooking, [*Crew begins to unload ice into ice house at Crosby’s behind us*] probably nobody going to hire me anymore so I keep doing it until I retire.

**00:16:53**

**Sara Wood:** If you would have chosen another job, if you would have never been out on the water here, how do you think you would have—how do you think your life would have been different if you would have never had this boat?

**00:17:03**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** I don’t hear, they chop the ice. Wait—

**00:17:07**

**Sara Wood:** We’ll wait.

**00:17:09**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yeah, okay.

**00:17:11**

**Sara Wood:** I wanted to know one more thing. If you would have never come up to Savannah to shrimp and you would have never had a boat how do you think your life would have been different?

**00:17:21**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh I think my life get better. Right now probably I have a lot of money and I get what I want. If I’m still working in the restaurant or mechanic, see and I come to shrimping I more than likely don’t have nothing. I used to have something but now looks like nothing. That’s true.

**00:17:47**

**Sara Wood:** Do you feel like there’re some things though that you—you’ve been out there and you’ve seen things and experienced things that most people will never get to experience? Do you ever think about that?

**00:17:56**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Yes, I think—I do think about that because this kind of job everybody wants to buy the boat or want to shrimping, you—you have to have experience, where—where that’s number one and you have to have experience. If you don’t have experience you cannot find the shrimp or catch the shrimp like anybody out there. You can learn, you can listen to your friend talking but you still don’t have experience.

**00:18:23**

**Sara Wood:** Well Lucky thank you for doing this.

**00:18:24**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** Oh you’re welcome.

**00:18:25**

**Sara Wood:** I appreciate it.

**00:18:26**

**Anuruck Suttiprasert:** You’re welcome.

**00:18:27**

**[End Anuruck Suttiprasert Interview]**